Retention Price Scheme and give its recommendations. GoM has also been asked to consider the Expenditure Reforms Commission's report and give its recommendations. Finalisation of these policy parameters for urea units would be announced after approval by the competent authority.

**Growth of Agricultural Sector**

*657. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to the Central Statistical Organisation, growth in the agricultural and allied sectors jumped to 7.1 per cent in 2001-2002, compared to 0.8 per cent in the third quarter of the previous year; if so, what are the factors which helped to attain this growth rate;

(b) whether any steps have been taken by Government to stabilize the same trend and improve it further in the coming years; and

(c) if so, the details thereof

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. According to the estimates released by the Central Statistical Organization, the growth rate of the sector, "Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing" was 7.1 per cent in the third quarter of 2001-02 as compared to (-) 0.8 per cent in the third quarter of the previous year.

Normal to excess rainfall which was well distributed spatially in major parts of the countty during the year 2001, the switch over to macro management mode of implementation of plan schemes providing required flexibility to the States, and the effective management of making adequate availability of inputs to the farm sector contributed to the increase in production in the year 2001-2002.

(c) Coverage of larger area under high yielding varieties, timely supply of inputs and adoption of strategy for diversification to high value crops like fruits and vegetables and to oilseeds and pulses are being stressed upon to maintain the agricultural growth in the coming years. Besides, the Government is also implementing a scheme, "On

Farm management for increasing Crop Production in Eastern India" which is expected not only to substantially enhance agricultural production but also introduce stability in agricultural growth in India.

**Schemes for Natural Calamities**

†*658. DR. A.K. PATEL: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that natural calamities take place every year in various States of the country;

(b) if so, whether Government have worked out some specific schemes to deal with such natural calamities; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise, as at the end of 2001?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) to (c) None of the natural calamities are totally avoidable; the harmful effects of most can, however be reduced or prevented with a proper system of forecast and risk reduction. A number of schemes ranging from Plan allocations for flood control to Drought Prone Area Programme are catering to problems concerning various types of natural calamities. Development funds are also made available to upgrade facilities of various scientific and technical organization like the India Meterological Department, the Central Water Commission and the Geological Survey of India etc. A Central Sector Scheme "Natural Disaster Management Programme" seeks to build up capacities to deal with natural calamities generally through provision of training of personnel, mass education and documentation etc. Till 2001-02, an expenditure of about Rs. 4.12 crore was incurred as cost of provision of training in 24 State level Institutions. Besides, a National Centre for Disaster Management was also funded under this Scheme which has so far conducted 70 training programmes, benefiting over 2500 persons and brought 12 publications.

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†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.